

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 TAIPEI 01066 280816Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 OES-06 HEW-06 PA-02 PRS-01
USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /052 W
-----280849 069819 /11
R 280658Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2676

UNCLAS TAIPEI 1066

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SPOP, TW
SUBJECT: 1976 POPULATION INCREASE WORRIES GROC

1. BEGINNING IN 1964, WHEN THE ISLAND-WIDE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM WAS STARTED, THERE WAS A CONTINUOUS DECLINE IN THE NATURAL INCREASE RATE, FROM 30 PER THOUSAND IN 1964 TO 18.3 PER THOUSAND IN 1975. IN 1976, HOWEVER, THE NATURAL INCREASE RATE ROSE TO 21 PER THOUSAND. THIS DEVELOPMENT IS CAUSING CONSIDERABLE CONCERN TO THE GROC SINCE ITS SIX YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1971-1981) IS BASED ON A NATURAL INCREASE RATE OF 16.9 PER THOUSAND BY 1981. IF THE 1976 RATE IS NOT REVERSED, THERE WILL BE SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS BY THE END OF THE PLANNING PERIOD FOR FOODSTUFFS, EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, HOUSING, HEALTH FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE.

2. IN SEARCHING FOR REASONS TO EXPLAIN THE 1976 POPULATION INCREASE, GROC FAMILY PLANNING OFFICIALS GIVE CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT TO THE FACT THAT 1976 WAS THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON IN THE 12-YEAR CYCLE LUNAR CALENDAR. BABIES BORN UNDER THE DRAGON SIGN ARE SUPPOSED TO BE PARTICULARLY BLESSED. THEREFORE, MANY FAMILIES WAITED UNTIL 1976 TO HAVE A CHILD, AND MANY MORE COUPLES THAN USUAL WERE MARRIED IN 1975 AND EARLY IN 1976 IN ORDER TO HAVE A "DRAGON BABY".

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 TAIPEI 01066 280816Z

3. ANYONE WHO EVER HAS LIVED IN TAIWAN COMES TO APPRECIATE THE PERSUASIVE INFLUENCE OF TRADITION AND FOLKLORE IN SOCIETY. THAT THEY SHOULD INFLUENCE DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS SHOULD NOT, THEREFORE, BE DISCOUNTED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS NO NET INCREASE IN POPULATION IN 1964 COMPARED WITH 1963 AND IN 1942 COMPARED WITH 1951. BOTH 1961 AND 1952 ALSO WERE YEARS OF THE DRAGON.

4. CERTAIN STATISTICAL EVIDENCE ALSO HELP TO EXPLAIN THE 1976 INCREASE. FIRST, AS A RESULT OF THE SHARP POPULATION INCREASE IN THE 1950'S THE NUMBER OF FEMALES IN THE MAJOR CHILD-BEARING AGE GROUP (15-29) HAS BEEN INCREASING. IN 1974, THIS GROUP COMPRISED 58.8 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL FEMALE POPULATION, WHILE IN 1975 THE PERCENTAGE WAS 59.7. THERE HAS, OF COURSE, BEEN A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF MALES IN THE SAME AGE GROUP. SECOND, SINCE THERE ARE MORE MALES AND FEMALES IN THE 15-29 AGE GROUP THE NUMBER OF MARRIAGES, WHILE IN 1976 THE FIGURE ROSE TO 155,000. ALSO, THE AVERAGE AGE AT MARRIAGE FOR BOTH MALES AND FEMALES HAS CECLINED. K.K. CHANG, CHIEF OF THE RURAL HALTH DIVISION OF JCRR (JOINT COMMISSION ON RURAL RECONSTRUCTION), WHO IS AS KNOWLEDGEABLE AS ANYONE IN TAIWAN ABOUT DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS, ATTRIBUTES THE CHANGING PATTERNS OF MARRIAGE TO IMPROVED ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. NO LONGER DO A MAN AND WOMAN HAVE TO DEFER THEIR MARRIAGE UNTIL THEY CAN AFFORD IT. NOT ONLY ARE MORE AND MORE WOMEN ENTERING THE INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICES LABOR FORCE, BUT ALSO MORE AND MORE OF THEM ARE MARRIED. THIRD, WHILE THE OVERALL DEATH RATE HAS REMAINED RELATIVELY CONSTANT, THE NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS HAS BEEN INCREASING, DUE TO IMPROVED HEALTH FACILITIES AND DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING PROPER PRE-NATAL PRACTICES. DURING THE PERIOD 1972-1975, THERE WERE AN AVERAGE OF 360,000 LIVE BIRTHS PER YEAR. IN 1976, THE NUMBER INCREASED TO 427,000. FOURTH, THE FERTILITY RATE AMONG WOMEN OF CHILD-BEARING AGE (15-49) HAS BEEN DECLINING SINCE 1972 EXCEPT IN THE AGE GROUP (15-29). OF THE 367,000 BABIES UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 TAIPEI 01066 280816Z

BORN IN 1975, 314,000 (85.5 PER CENT) WERE TO MOTHERS AGED 15-29 AND ONLY 53,000 (14.5 PER CENT) TO MOTHERS OVER 30 YEARS OF AGE.

5. GROC FAMILY PLANNING AGENCIES ARE CONVINCED THAT THE 1976 POPULATION INCREASE WAS THE RESULT OF AN UNUSUAL JUXTAPOSITION OF CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND DEMONGRAPHIC CONDITIONS AND THAT THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IS BASICALLY SOUND. THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON HAS BEEN SUCCEDED BY THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE, AND THE LATTER TRADITIONALLY IS NOT A PARTICULARLY PROPITIOUS SIGN UNDER WHICH TO BE BORN. AS FOR THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM ITSELF, CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO COPE WITH THE CHANGING ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS. HUSBANDS, AS WELL AS WIVES, WILL BE A TARGET GROUP IN PROMOTING FAMILY PLANNING. MORE ATTENTION WILL BE DEVOTED TO RURAL AREAS. MARRIED WOMEN OVER 30 YEARS OF AGE WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO ACCEPT STERLIZATION, MARRIED WOMEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 20 AND 29 WILL BE EDUCATED ON THE BENEFITS OF WIDELY SPACING BIRTHS, AND FEMALES UNDER THE AGE OF 20 WILL BE ENCOURAGED

TO DEFER MARRIAGE.
UNGER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POPULATION DATA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TAIPEI01066
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770068-0381
Format: TEL
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977021/aaaaaayb.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 46381fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3228345
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 1976 POPULATION INCREASE WORRIES GRO
TAGS: SPPOP, TW
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/46381fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009